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Livestock Industry Facilities and Environment: Swine Breeding Systems—the Breeding Square System

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Swine Breeding Systems - the *Breeding Square System*¹



Livestock
Industry
Facilities &
Environment

The development of the breeding square system is credited to Joe Conner, DVM of the Carthage, IL Vet Clinic. The breeding square is arranged with four breeding pens that are surrounded by turn-around crates. The two sides of the square facing each other are the same sex animal. The corners hold the gilts in pens. The center is divided into four breeding pens, each 11 ft by 11 ft. This system is designed for twenty boars, twenty sows, and sixteen gilts.

Advantages of the system include:

- Multitude of boar/sow breeding combinations;
- Center of breeding square can be made into a “quick escape” for breeding worker safety;
- Allows easy animal movement with boars and sows being let out directly into the breeding pens;
- Efficient labor for breeding manager.

Disadvantages of the system include:

- Sows are continuously exposed to the boars making heat detection more difficult;
- Workers must crawl over gates to access breeding pens;
- Unique manure management systems (unless over a deep pit) therefore poor opportunity for remodeling;
- Turnaround crates are required which may result in more expense and may encourage dunging in feed troughs;
- A great deal of specialized gating may be required;
- Limited sow spaces make moving animals during implantation necessary.

Further information:

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